

# Origami cranes — Positivity

## EXPLANATION:

In Japan, origami is a popular art form that is commonly integrated into the curriculum to help students develop patience and enhance memory and concentration. The story of Sadako Sasaki and her classmates also provides a story of inspiration and positive action. After critically reflecting on the story students will have the opportunity to make some origami cranes!

**YEAR LEVELS:** Years 7–10

**STUDENT GROUPING:** Whole class discussion and individual creations

**ACTIVITY LENGTH:** 45 - 60mins approx.

## LINK TO CURRICULUM:

### Personal and Social Capability

#### *Social management*

This element involves students interacting effectively and respectfully with a range of adults and peers. Students learn to negotiate and communicate effectively with others; work in teams, positively contribute to groups and collaboratively make decisions; resolve conflict and reach positive outcomes. They develop the ability to initiate and manage successful personal relationships, and participate in a range of social and communal activities. Social management involves building skills associated with leadership, such as mentoring and role modelling. In developing and acting with personal and social capability, students:

- communicate effectively
- work collaboratively
- make decisions
- negotiate and resolve conflict
- develop leadership skills.

Communicate effectively:

- formulate plans for effective communication (verbal, nonverbal, digital) to complete complex tasks

## SCOPE OF TASK

There are many traits and characteristics associated with a positive mindset including: gratitude, mindfulness, integrity, optimism, acceptance, and resilience. An individual's positive energy and actions can influence other people's emotions and wellbeing. Research suggests that shared positivity—having two people experiencing the same emotion may have greater impact on health than something positive experienced by oneself. The story of Sadako Sasaki demonstrates the reach of shared action and positivity.

1. With the whole class, activate the students' knowledge of positivity:

- What is positivity?
- Who has experienced positivity from others?
- What did that look or feel like?
- Have you ever shared positivity with others?

Inform students that an individual's positive energy and actions can influence other people's emotions and wellbeing and that 'shared positivity' has significant benefits for all!

2. Share with the whole group the story of Sadako Sasaki. This is a story initially of Sadako's hope that her wish would be granted if she folded 1000 origami cranes. But what happened after her death and the following years can be considered positive action. Sadako's classmates continued to make the 1000 cranes. Her classmates and the community then raised funds to have a statue erected in her memory. The Children's Peace Monument in Hiroshima attracts many visitors and people all over the world continue to fold origami cranes to symbolise hope and positive action. The full story can be read below and there are many short movies available on YouTube sharing Sadako's story. An example of video stories is below:



3. After the students have watched videos or read the story of Sadako, ask them to reflect on the story. Students can also search the web to discover more details about the story of Sadako to inform their discussion. Importantly move to discuss the actions of positivity and hope that followed Sadako's death. Questions could include:

- Since Sadako's death what has happened?
- Why do people continue to fold origami cranes?
- How does shared positivity support peoples' actions?

4. After the discussion unpacking Sadako's story and the emotions of hope and positivity ask students if they would like to fold some origami cranes. Ask the students to work in groups to decipher the instructions for folding origami cranes and to continue to discuss the story. Ask students how could folding cranes be an act of hope and positivity for them? Instructions for folding origami cranes are included below and others can be found on the internet.

**Folded cranes could be displayed in classrooms or focal places around the school. The students could share with other students a message of hope and positivity!**

### **RESOURCES:**

- Origami paper
- Story of Sadako – attached to end of activity or accessed online via a range of sources
- Instructions for folding origami cranes – also a range of videos with instructions. For example:



## The story of Sadako Sasaki

Sadako Sasaki was born on January 7, 1943. Sadako lived near Misasa Bridge in Hiroshima where the atomic bomb was dropped on August 6, 1945 during World War two. She was only 2 years old.

Most of Sadako's neighbours died, but Sadako wasn't injured at all, at least not in any way people could see. Up until the time Sadako was in the seventh grade (1955) she was a normal, happy girl. However, one day after an important relay race that she helped her team win, she felt extremely tired and dizzy. After a while the dizziness went away leaving Sadako to think that it was only the exertion from running the race that made her tired and dizzy. But her peacefulness did not last. Soon after her first encounter with extreme fatigue and dizziness, she experienced more incidents of the same.

One day Sadako became so dizzy that she fell and couldn't get up. Her school-mates informed the teacher. Later Sadako's parents took her to the Red Cross Hospital to see what was wrong with her. They were informed that she had leukemia, a kind of blood cancer. Nobody could believe it. At that time, they called leukemia the "A-bomb disease". Almost everyone who got this disease died, and Sadako was very scared. She wanted to go back to school, but she had to stay in the hospital.



Sadako's best friend, Chizuko Hamamota, came to visit her.

Chizuko brought some folding paper to make origami. She told Sadako that the crane, a sacred bird in Japan, lives for a hundred years, and if a sick person folds 1,000 paper cranes, then that person would soon get well. After hearing the legend, Sadako decided to fold 1,000 cranes in the hope that she would get well again. Sadako's family often came to visit her in hospital to talk to her and to help her fold cranes. Sadako kept folding cranes even though she was in great pain. Even during these times of great pain, she tried to be cheerful and hopeful.

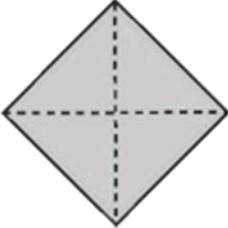
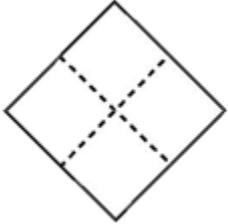
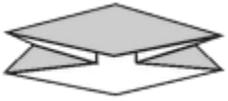
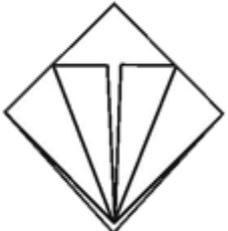
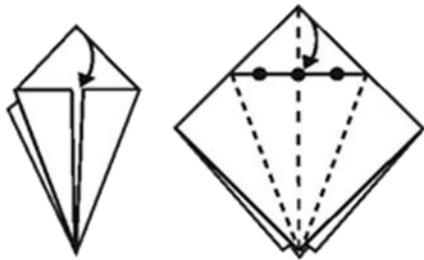
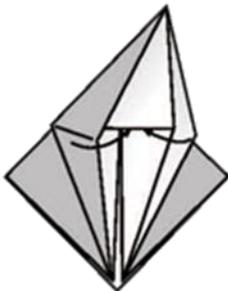
On October 25, 1955 with her family standing by her bed, Sadako went to sleep peacefully, never to wake up again. She had folded a total of 644 paper cranes. Everyone was very sad. Thirty-nine of Sadako's classmates felt saddened by the loss of their close friend and decided to form a paper crane club to honour her finally making 1000 cranes.

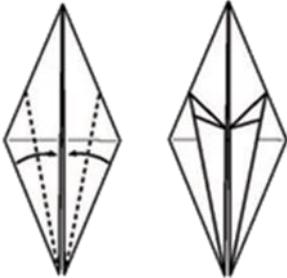
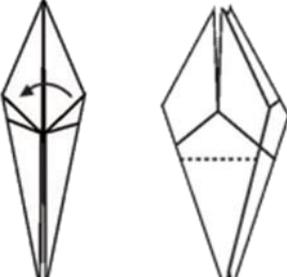
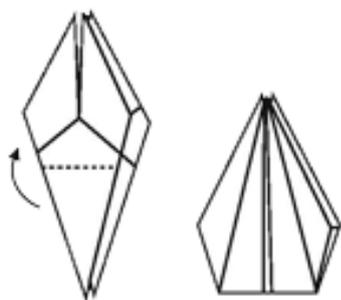
After Sadako died, her friends and her schoolmates published letters in a positive action to raise the funds to build Sadako a memorial to her and the other children in Japan who had died because of the atom bomb. In 1958, the monument was complete. It was a statue of Sadako, and in her hands is a golden crane. It is now known as the Children's Peace Monument and is in the centre of Hiroshima Peace Park, close to the spot where the atomic bomb was dropped.

Today, the story of Sadako Sasaki continues to remind us of the far-reaching impacts of war and lasting effects of bomb warfare. But the story also reminds us of the positive difference that combined action by the people can have for others, the community and the world!

(Photo courtesy of Sasaki Masahiro and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum)

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FOLDING AN ORIGAMI CRANE

	<p>Start with a square piece of paper, coloured side up. Fold the top corner of the paper down to the bottom corner. Crease and open again. Then fold the paper in half sideways.</p>
	<p>Flip the paper over to the white side. Fold the paper in half, crease well and open, and then fold again in the other direction.</p>
	<p>Fold along all four creases at once to form a square with the open end facing you.</p>
	<p>Fold two edges in, to form a kite-shape on top. Repeat on other side.</p>
	<p>Fold the point down and crease above the other two folds. Flip the paper and repeat fold. Undo the folds you made in steps 4 and 5.</p>
	<p>Pull the bottom corner (top layer only) up above the top corner. Fold along the creases you made in steps 4 and 5. Repeat on the other side.</p>

	<p>Fold two edges in to form a kite-shape. Repeat on the other side.</p>
	<p>Fold the top layer (right side) to lay on top of the left side like turning the page of a book. Flip over to repeat on the other side.</p>
	<p>Fold the top layer up as far as you can on each side.</p>
	<p>Fold the top layer (right side) to lay on top of the left side like turning the page of a book. Flip over to repeat on the other side.</p>
	<p>Fold down wings.</p>
	<p>Bend down the head to give the crane a long beak. Pull the wings straight out from the body so that the body puffs out.</p>